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SUBJECT: CEC COMMITS TO FALL VOTERS LIST UPDATE CAMPAIGN

REF: TBILISI 1036

¶1. During a meeting with Poloff on May 4, Guram Chalagashvili, the Chairman of the Central Election Commission (CEC), said that the CEC will conduct a door-to-door campaign to update the voters list in September or October. He stated that this campaign, in concert with a newly launched quality control effort at the Civil Registry Office within the Ministry of Justice to correct typos in their data, should result in a further improved voters list for the Fall 2008 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. (Note: Data from the Civil Registry is the primary source for generating the voters list. International donors, including USAID, are currently funding modernization of the Civil Registry. End Note.)

¶2. The Chairman's statement comes in the immediate wake of the OSCE Ambassadors' Elections Group May 2 meeting with Speaker Nino Burjanadze to present their 'one voice' strategy designed to encourage the GoG to take action to ensure that the 2008 elections build on the progress made since the 2003 Rose Revolution and are deemed fair by observers as were the 2006 local elections. Among the key initiatives in this 'one voice' strategy is a campaign to improve the voters list. See reftel.

¶3. Also as called for in the 'one voice' strategy, the Chairman told Poloff that his office is currently developing a strategic plan for the 2008 elections. He stated that he was looking forward to an upcoming UNDP assessment which would help the CEC establish its training priorities and schedule for the next 15 months.

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